

# The South African Savanna

## ORIGIN OF THE BREED

The development of the white Savanna goat started in 1955 on a farm belonging to DSU Cilliers and Sons. The near river location of the farm enforced little care and with fluctuating temperatures and rainfall, the goats were expected to adjust, survive and multiply in a typical savanna environment. The breed started off by using an indigenous multi-color, floppy ear female and a large white buck. The result was a fertile, heat-, parasite- and drought resistant breed with good meat characteristics.

Interest in the breed led to the recognition of the specie in its own right and the Savannah Goat Breeders Association was formed in 1993.



*Herd of breed females belonging to Mr Cilliers*



*Mr. Lubbe Cilliers & Dr. Quintin Campbell*

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Medium to large white floppy ear buck with a thick loose skin and short, smooth hair. In spite of the white color, the Savannah buck is well pigmented with all non hairy areas colored black to brown.

## CHARACTERISTICS

- Fertile with good mother instincts. Females give birth in the open veld and bind well with their kids.
- Multiple births
- Good growth from the surrounding growth (Veld)
- Balanced carcass with little fat and tender appetizing meat
- Very good at searching for food, good grazers, utilize grass well and effective control of bush and weeds
- Well pigmented
- Parasite resistant/tolerant
- Heat tolerant

Level temperament, easy care with maximum profit

## GENERAL

The Savanna goat must be a strong, lively, functional, effective buck with an awake but not wild posture.

The females must be of average/medium size and should appear petite and feminine. Females with suckling kids must be protective of the kids and should defend them aggressively against dogs and other predators.

Bucks must appear manly, stately, robust and muscular.

The Savanna goat is developed under harsh conditions and should easily endure harsh conditions like heat, intense sunlight, cold and rain.

The breed moves with ease and can, should the need arise, travel long distances in search of food and water.

The Savanna goat must be able to utilize a wide spectrum of plants for example trees, bushes, brush, grass and shrubs that are hard, even when undesirable for other animals.

The goat must have a lengthy breeding season and must be able to produce and breed kids any time of the year.

### **SPECIFIC BREED CHARACTERISTICS**

- Lively appearance
  - Symmetric build: not too short, not too long body or legs
  - Thick, loose and dark pigmented loose skin
  - Short Kemp-like whi, older goats, te hair coverage. In winter, the goat develops extra down-like hair to protect itself.
  - The goat has strong jaws with well developed and durable teeth.
  - Good mother characteristics and high fertility
- Long productive life cycle.

### **HEAD**

The Savanna has a average length head with a slightly bent nose section and the shape of head is like the head of a large mouth yellow fish. The head and nose must be quite wide but not sharp-like.

The mouth must be strong and relatively wide with muscular jaws. The upper and lower lips must be muscular and loose like those of the Kudu.

The teeth of young, old, male and female goats must have a good bite on the cushion of the top jaw. No deviations or mouth defects will be tolerated. Only with a full mouth buck or female is a 6mm too long bottom jaw allowed.

The eyes must be lively, encircled by black pigmented eye lids and skin. Must be protected by a well developed eye banks.

### **EARS**

The ears must be moderate in size, hang to the side of the head, must be neat and have an oval shape. The ears must be well pigmented and must be well reactive in order to easily deter ticks, midges, gad-flies and other parasites.

### **HORNS**

The horns are dark black and grow to the rear. Must be sturdy, oval shaped and must not press against the neck. Must not be wild or too wide or too long. Males have stronger and heavier horns than the females. The base of the must show a reasonable gap.

Females, as well as bucks must drop their horns in an aggressive stance to protect their young when threatened.

### **NECK, FRONT QUARTERS, LEGS AND CLAWS**

The neck is muscular and relatively long so it can easily lift its head to reach and eat branches, leaves and pods that are high up on trees.

The front quarter is muscular and of moderate width. Too narrow or too wide front quarters will be discriminated against. The front legs are well placed and straight. The pipe-leg beneath the knee on both the front and hind legs is relatively short but strong. The talus-joint on both front and hind legs must be strong and resilient and should show a moderate slope. Upright or slow talus-joints will also be strongly discriminated against.

The claws on both the front and hind legs must be strong (durable), hard, black and relatively large. The two individual claws (trotters) of each claw must be against each other.

The claws must not grow out and the claws of the Savanna must not crack, must not easily inflame or be sore.

Top of the legs must be well integrated and fixed to the front quarters and hump.

The hump area is slightly higher as the back and rear-end. Older bucks show moderate skin wrinkles, especially on

the front quarters.

### **BACK AND MIDDLE AREA**

The middle area must be relatively long and deep and the goat must show capacity to take in and digest roughage.

The back and eye muscles (musculus longissimus dorsi) must be strong and wide, not straight and also not hollow.

The middle area must not, especially in older animals, be cylindrical or shallow. The Savanna goat has a good rack of ribs and an oval respiratory middle area.

### **REAR QUARTERS AND HIND LEGS**

The rear quarter must be wide and the hind legs must be widely placed and run straight down. The cross must show a gradual slope to the rear, like those on a Gemsbok. The rear quarters must be muscular and well covered in meat.

The Achilles must be strong, muscular and the Achilles tendon must be clearly visible. Achilles should not turn inwards or outwards and it should be easy for the goat to stand on its hind legs.

The tail of the Savanna goat must stand up straight, covered in hair and should move with ease. The naked areas should show black pigmented skin.

### **COLOUR, PIGMENTATION AND HAIR**

The Savanna is completely white. Limited quantities of black or red hair are acceptable but should be phased out. Pigmentation on male and females should be dark-gray to black. Light colored spots should not be present in Elite bucks or does. Anything pink is an error.

The Savanna is a totally white goat with black skin, horns, nose-tip, udder, sex organs and claws. This colour corresponds to the so-called royal Nguni cattle.

The hair coverage comprises of short white hemp-like hair. Fine down-like hair appears during cold winter months to protect the goat against cold.

### **SEX ORGANS**

Normal, well developed sex organs are expected. The buck should have two well developed testicles in a small sack. The scrotum on bucks should be about 26cm in circumference and should a gap be present, 2cm will be the maximum acceptable measurement.

Turned testes are not allowed and testes must be of similar size.

**Does:** Well developed and solid udder as per attachment A will be taken as guide and will be valid and binding until such time that research either confirms or indicates something different.

### **TEATS**

**Bucks:** One teat on either side of the testicle sack is ideal and two on a side are provisionally acceptable until 26 January 2011.

**Does:** Two functional teats are ideal. Dual teats are not allowed but a single teat with two holes are acceptable but should be phased out. Teats showing a small 'blind/non functional' teat are acceptable. Maximum number of teats per side is three of which two should be functional or one functional and two small/blind. ALL SHOULD BE SEPARATE FROM ONE ANOTHER

### **FERTILITY AND GROWTH ABILITY**

The breed is well known for its fertility, good mothering abilities and before- and after teat rate of growth.

22% twins could occur and females should take well care of them. Females, especially stud females should be able to give unassisted birth anywhere and should be able to care and tend to the kids.

Too large kids at birth will be discriminated against.

## DUDS / FAULTS

- Faulty mouths
  - Faulty legs and talus
  - Faulty sex organs and udders
  - Any deviation to the normal build that prejudices the functional integrity of the Savanna
- Incomplete or light pigment

## SUMMARY

South Africa, with its ever changing weather conditions and extensive grazing areas that stretches from the Kalahari sand regions to thick bushveld areas, is the birth place of the largest variety of wild buck and indigenous breeds in the world. This includes the kudu, eland, gemsbok, swartwitpens, springbok and many more wild buck types. In the case of farming animals, a selection of cattle breeds like the Afrikaner and the Nguni had their origins here. The Savanna should also be seen as a proud indigenous product of this sunny but unforgiving country and its extreme conditions. Natural selection created the Savanna.













## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Author: Dr. Quintin Cambell

Special mention: Founder/Breeder of the Savannah Breed: Mr. Lubbe Cilliers

Translated from the original Afrikaans version by Johann Hills. (To ensure none of the facts from the original document were missed, the translation was done in conjunction with Mr. Lubbe Cilliers)

## APPENDIX A

<u>Speen Tipes - Teat Types</u>		<u>Kategorië / Categories</u>
1.		Ideal / Ideaal
2.		Acceptable / Aanvaarbaar
3.		Acceptable / Aanvaarbaar
4.		Acceptable / Aanvaarbaar
5.		Acceptable / Aanvaarbaar
6.		Acceptable / Aanvaarbaar
<u>Speen Tipes - Teat Types</u>		<u>Kategorië / Categories</u>
7.		Acceptable only for commercial goats. Aanvaarbaar slegs vir kudde bokke.
8.		Acceptable for stud & commercial goats. Aanvaarbaar vir stoet en kudde bokke.
<u>Speen Tipes - Teat Types</u>		<u>Kategorië / Categories</u>
9.		Cull / Prul
10.		Cull / Prul
11.		Cull / Prul
12.		Cull / Prul